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CIA Probe Should Be Thorough And Should Lead to Reforms

This nation and its President who has been its chief executive for only three months—scarcely long enough to “get his feet on the ground”—today are facing one of the most pressing

foreign policy problems in years. That is, what to do about Cuba and when, what with the initial effort of the anti-Communist rebels having proved such a complete failure.

The results of that failure are multiple, and all unpleasant. Fidel Castro is, presumably, more firmly in the saddle than ever. The Cuban rebel exiles are depressed and confused. The United States intelligence service has been made a laughing stock. And another failure has been racked up against this country, for it supplied and encouraged the rebel forces. The result is another blow to United States prestige.

The Cuban revolutionary movement must not be allowed to fail. Castro must not get those 150 Migs to be flown by his own men, trained in Czechoslovakia, or by outside Communist fliers. The Cuban focus of infection must not be allowed to spread, and Cuba must not be made a rocket, air and submarine base to be used against us and the other nations of this hemisphere.

The administration may move quickly or deliberately, but it must move. If it cannot move in concert with the other members of the O.A.S., as it would prefer to do, it will have to move alone, as the President said last week.

Meanwhile, the President's decision to investigate the Central Intelligence Agency is to be applauded. The CIA failed miserably in the Cuban fiasco.

It seriously underestimated Castro's police state control over the Cuban people. It as certainly underestimated Castro's military power. If it is true that the CIA reported Castro had only four planes the whole top command should be fired.

The CIA failed also in permitting, or encouraging, the invasion attempt before the underground had been supplied with equipment for widespread sabotage that could have paralyzed Castro's forces. It erred in allowing the operation to appear to be a major invasion when actually it was a small scale affair. It erred in anticipating a great uprising of the people to aid the invaders. The Hungarians fought tanks with rocks but it is fatuous to imagine anybody else will do so. And it has not been demonstrated that the Cuban people were entirely sold on some of their prospective liberators in the revolutionary front.

If the CIA made so many mistakes regarding Cuba, only 90 miles from Florida, what of its information in other areas of the cold war and especially its intelligence from behind the iron curtain?

The probe which the President has asked his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, to participate in should be a thorough one. All the signs are that our top intelligence agency is inadequate to do its job.